1: Hart & Pilling E-5 (1928-1954) 1960
OI20 Tiwi OI20

in the party who carried only ordinary ones. The painted spears were symbols of wealth and status and roughly corresponded to white tie and tails in our culture. No important man could afford not to have them, even though for most of the year they were unused. Before leaving home on a journey, it was often necessary for a man to renew the paint on his spears, for it rubbed off easily. Since paint was an aspect of ritual, its use, even the renewal of old paint, was senior men's prerogative; women were not supposed to touch it.[8] The analogy with formal dress even extended to the borrowing of ceremonial spears. An important man, caught short of them, might borrow some from a contemporary who had plenty, and though everybody would know that his spears were borrowed, he at least was properly dressed for the occasion, though stark naked otherwise.

Baskets made of bark with gummed sides were made by the women, but the painted designs upon these baskets were applied by the men, in line with their monopoly on all work that required paint. These baskets of various sizes but little variation in shape were used for all domestic tasks involving the collection, storing, transporting, and preparing of vegetable foods, and were sufficiently watertight to enable water also to be carried in them. Ordinary wooden spears (without barbs or painted designs) and a great variety of throwing sticks were made by all men, young or old, but important old men bothered with them very little, considering such routine manufacture beneath them. These workaday spears and throwing sticks lay around every camp in abundance, and a man who needed spears or sticks in a hurry could always gather up a bundle in a few minutes. Small boys picked up the techniques of making spears and throwing sticks by spending time with older boys who in turn improved their skill both in making and using hunting weapons by spending time with the local young men.

Although much of this learning was fairly random, other instruction was not. During his initiation period a youth spent long intervals isolated in the bush with a couple of older teachers from whom he received training in religious and ritual matters. At the same time, of course, it was inevitable that the novice absorb some of the older men's experience in bushcraft. There was no corresponding initiation period for girls. What they learned, they learned first from the older women of their childhood household and later from the older women of the husband's household into which they moved as child-brides after puberty. In all households the supervision by the elderly women of all younger women included the training of both female children and young wives in the things all females should know—things which were mostly concerned with collecting and preparing vegetable foods and the making of baskets.

In pre-white times Tiwi males wore no clothing whatever. The Mission insisted on calico loincloths, but, at least in the 1928-29 period, one could

[8] Female mourners were required to daub their bodies with white clay as a sign of mourning, but this paint was smeared haphazardly over their bodies and faces without any attempt at regularity or design, in contrast to the careful paint designs on the men's bodies.

2: Mountford E-5 (1954) 1958
OI20 Tiwi OI20

411 412 (f) The aborigines of Melville and Bathurst Islands have a particularly limited material culture. They have only double-ended, or simple wooden barbed spears, which they throw by hand as one would throw a javelin. This form of propulsion contrasts strongly with the mainland, where the use of the spear-thrower is universal. Nor do the Tiwi use any small mounted stone tools. Before the advent of steel, their only cutting tool was a cockle-shell, held in the hand. It is likely that until about fifty years ago, until Joe [177] Cooper brought the mainland aborigines, with their polished stone axes, to Melville Island, the Tiwi possessed only a crudely flaked stone axe, mounted in a length of split wood with the gum of a eucalyptus tree. In addition, all of [415] the Tiwi carrying utensils are made of bark, because the Islanders lack the [285] knowledge of any form of basketry or of the netting techniques.

It is evident, then, that within the range of the research I was able to 105 undertake, there are many differences between the culture of the Tiwi and 171 that of the aborigines of the nearby mainland. There is little doubt that Miss Goodale's research, when published, will reveal further dissimilarities.[46]

My research, however, must be considered only as a preliminary study, 123 within the limits of the subjects enumerated. Lack of transport prevented me from visiting any of the totemic sites, and limited time from investigating more fully other aspects of their beliefs.

It is my sincere hope that this study will be continued by another ethnologist before civilization has distorted or destroyed the interesting cultural life of the Tiwi.

[46] Since the writing of this book, Chaseling has referred (1957, p. 170) to a female ancestor (unnamed) who created much of the mainland side of Dundas Strait. This information would suggest that Melville Island and the adjacent mainland are more closely linked mythologically, and perhaps culturally, than the evidence in this book suggests. Further research on this subject will be awaited with interest.

[114] [173]

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 O120 Tiwi O120

by a similar mass, whence two strings only continue for 40 odd centimetres. The whole length of the band, therefore, amounts to approximately 50 centimetres. Its object is, no doubt, to fasten the mask in position over the face during corroboree ceremonies.

Domestic Utensils.

Food carriers.—The most common form of "mika" or carrier for food and other articles is one made of a single piece of bark of the "stringy bark" eucalypt (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 3, 4, 5, and 6). An oblong piece of such bark, say 1 metre long by 40 centimetres broad, is freshly cut and folded transversely at its centre. The edges on either side are pared down, then laid flat, one over the other, and sewn or laced together with plain "run-on" stitches, 2 centimetres apart. A row of slanting and overlapping stitches often skirts the open edge at a short distance down; occasionally, too, part of the edge is cross-hemstitched and plastered with beeswax. The object of this procedure is to prevent the bark from tearing by virtue of its fibrous structure. The open mouth of the carrier is nearly circular or oval; in the latter case the long axis of the oval runs at right angles to the base-edge of the implement. These carriers are of various sizes; the largest that came under observation measured 63 centimetres in height and 43 in width at the base. Ordinarily they are unpainted, but on special occasions elaborate designs, consisting of circles, oblong and other figures, with cross-hatched shading, are drawn on the outer surface in red, yellow, white, and black. The designs are best studied by reference to the reproductions (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 5 and 6). Occasionally tassel-shaped appendages are noticed at one of the convex outer surfaces of the mouth of the carrier. These consist of a flattish, egg-shaped mass of beeswax (studded on the surface with the red beans of *Abrus praccatorius*), which is suspended by two twisted fur strings (*vide* Plate VIII, Fig. 6).

Water carriers.—Water is taken to camp from a soakage or spring in simple structures made out of the bark of the paper-bark tree (*Melaleuca sp.*). An oblong piece of this bark is bent upon itself longitudinally, both its ends folded several times and kept together by binding with cane or by spiking with short pointed wooden pegs (*vide* Plate VIII, Figs. 1 and 2).

Drinking vessels.—Several natural objects are used for drinking vessels. Among the most common are the discarded tests of mollusca. The species *Melo-diadema* and *Fusus pricei* were found in use at several native wells (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 1 and 2).

But when no such shells are available a piece of bark is torn or cut from a tree (usually from a *Melaleuca*) and folded so as to form a water-tight cup (*vide* Plate XIV, Figs. 3 and 4). This piece of bark, which measures about 30 centimetres by 20, is folded longitudinally at about its middle (*vide* Fig. 3, D). Both ends are then bent upon themselves at right angles to this plane and at about one quarter the whole length from either end. The overturned ends and the inner

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

322 piece of the former fold are clasped between the fingers and thus used as a cup
415 the part lying opposite to the fingers being held to the lips.

Honey Eating.

222 In my notes on the north-western tribes of the Northern Territory I have
262 described[1] a honey-collecting implement and there, also, referred to somewhat
264 similar observations made by Dr. Wilson[2] and Keppel.[3]

On Bathurst Island I observed still another modification. A young flower-stalk of the fan-palm (*Livistonia humilis*), when about 50 to 70 centimetres long, is cut just above the trunk of the palm and its bottom end chewed until all the fibres are separated and look like the hairs of a brush. The juice, being quite sweet, is swallowed. The brush end is then inserted into the nest of the wild bee (*Trigona sp.*), whereby the honey gathers between the fibres. When saturated with honey, the brush end is passed back to the mouth and again sucked and chewed for a considerable time, after which it is once more returned to the honey for a fresh supply, and this is continued to repletion.

Tree Climbing.

481 [222] Both male and female, young and old, are expert tree-climbers when in pursuit of game, honey of the wild bee, fruits, and seeds. As none of the trees on the islands grow to an abnormally large size, the butt is usually not too great in circumference to allow of the arms being thrown around it, so that the hands may obtain a firm hold on the side distant from the climber. Having obtained this hold while standing on the ground and facing the tree, the native jumps on to the butt, clutching it with the flat surfaces of his feet in a frog-like fashion. The knees in this position stand well outwards. The body hangs, suspended by the arms above and held against the tree by the legs below. The climber now raises his body; his hands quickly follow by a corresponding distance. Holding on with the latter he draws up his legs in a jumping manner once more to clutch the tree between the soles of his feet. This movement being repeated, he rapidly advances upwards.

Hunting and Fighting.

411 *Throwing-sticks and clubs.*—Several types of throwing-sticks and clubs are in use. They must be referred to under this general or collective heading, since it is hard to discriminate between the two implements and to say definitely where the throwing-stick ends and the club begins. They form an interesting group of Australian implements and weapons that allows of a satisfactory system of

[1] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia*, vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 26, Fig. 19.
[2] *Narrative Voyage Round the World*, 1835, p. 99.
[3] *A Visit to Indian Archipelago*, 1853, vol. 2, p. 168.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

demands it; but usually, when on a simple turtle or dugong hunting expedition, two persons only occupy places in the craft, one near the bow and another near the stern (*vide* Plate X, Figs. 1 and 2). The boatmen, while propelling the craft, squat with their buttocks resting upon the heels and with their knees pressed against the sides. The weight of their body being thus well within the boat, its stability is thereby considerably increased.

Paddles.—Propulsion is effected by means of paddles which are made of hard wood. They have a single well-shaped blade and a rounded handle (*vide* Plate XII, Fig. 2). The edges of the blade are parallel or taper slightly towards the end, which is square or rounded. Apart from the marks left by the tomahawk used in its making, the implement is without ornamentation. In one case only, a circular collar was carved around the handle, immediately above the sloping shoulder of the blade. The longest paddle noted measured 167 centimetres in length, its blade 80; the shortest was 115 centimetres in length and its blade 45. The width of the blades ranges from 7 to 9 centimetres. Both hands clasp the paddle, which is dipped alternately on one side or the other as the occasion and the steering require it.

Balers.—Water that accumulates in the canoe, either by leakage or overwash in a rough sea, is removed by means of a baler which is made out of the melon shell[1] (*Melo diadema*). The columella of the shell is carefully cut away, leaving only the large body-whorl, which is used as a scoop (*vide* Plate XI, Figs. 3 and 4). The outer surface of the shell is painted with red and yellow ochre in large cross pattern, with a fine cross shading.

Dug-outs.—The dug-out canoes to which I have elsewhere referred[2] have, in all probability, been introduced by Malays from whom the natives obtain them by barter. Dr. Walter Roth has also proved that the dug-outs met with along the coast of Queensland are of Papuan origin. The form observed in Apsley Strait is without outrigger and hollowed out of a single tree trunk. The bow and stern are raised (*vide* Plate X, Fig. 2).

Corrobborees.

As with all primitive folk, song and dance constitute the ultimate stage of any social intercourse or festivity. The islanders are even more ready than their brothers on the mainland to resort to this means of entertainment. It thus happened that, wherever we came into contact with the blacks and presented them with divers small articles, a corrobboree was immediately inaugurated; even though the encounter happened to occur in the middle of the day. Corrobborees on the

[1] *Cf. Narrative Voyage H.M.S. "Rattlesnake,"* vol. ii, p. 17: "the baler (a melon shell) is in constant requisition."

[2] *Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Australia,* vol. xxxi, 1907, p. 53. Among others, note that Major Campbell says of the Port Essington natives that "such of the canoes as I saw were hollowed from the trunks of trees, like those of the Malays and were probably either left by these people or stolen from them," *Proc. Roy. Geog. Soc.*, London, vol. iv, 1834, p. 170.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

Notes on the

The first plate reproduced contains a group composed of five imprints of the left hand of a native (Plate XIX, Fig. 1). The fingers are wide apart; the wrists of the two lowest hands seem very narrow in proportion, but that is due to the fact that they did not lie in close contact with the surface when the pigment was squirted against it. 531

In the lower corner on the right of the reproduction stands a single-masted sailing craft, intended to represent a small European pearling or fishing-boat. The former class of boats have long been in the habit of passing through Apsley Strait on account of the shelter afforded and the chances of procuring fresh water close to the shores of either island. 532

Plate XIX, Fig. 2, is the lower continuation of the proceeding. The sailing craft just described is noticed on the right. Below it is the picture of a frog. Special features of this design are firstly the two circular lateral prominences on the head representing the large eyes and, secondly, the inaccuracy in regard to the number of toes. The smear on the left hind leg, resembling a caudal appendage, is accidental.

The fourth design (Plate XX) is that of a double-masted pearling-lugger[1] in full sail. The proportion and neatness of execution of these designs of sailing crafts are excellent indeed. The hulk and sails of the latter figure are drawn in white pipe-clay and its masts in red ochre.

DESCRIPTION OF PLATES.

Plate VII.

Figs. 1 and 3. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with fur strings and cockatoo feathers. ¼ natural size. 301 531

Figs. 2 and 4. Front and side view of arm decoration, made of bark, coloured with ochre and ornamented with pointed sticks. ¼ natural size.

Plate VIII.

Figs. 1 and 2. Water-carriers, made of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). ¼ natural size. 415

Figs. 3, 4, 5 and 6. Food-carriers, made of bark; Figs. 5 and 6 with ochre drawings. ¼ natural size. 531

Plate IX.

Figs. 1, 2, 3 and 4. Throwing-sticks and clubs. ¼ natural size. 411

Fig. 5. A collection of spears from Bathurst Island. $\frac{1}{12}$ natural size. 531

by filling the mouth with charcoal powder if the device is to be black, if red with red ochre powder, damping the wall where the mark is to be left, and placing the palm of the hand against it, with fingers stretched out; the charcoal or ochre powder is then blown against the back of the hand; when it is withdrawn, it leaves the space occupied by the hand and fingers clean while the surrounding portions of the wall are all black or red, as the case may be." (Central Australian Natives.)

[1] *Vide* figure in *Report Government Geologist and Staff*, 1905, Adelaide, By authority, p. 14.

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

PLATE X.

501 Fig. 1. "Fish-tail" bark canoes, Apsley Strait.
Fig. 2. "Fish-tail" bark canoes and "dug-out" canoe in the distance, Apsley Strait. Melville Island in the background.

PLATE XI.

Figs. 1 and 2. Bow and stern of "fish-tail" bark canoe. $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Baler made out of the melon shell. Fig. 3 shows the painted decoration of the outer surface; while in Fig. 4 it is seen how the columella of the shell has been removed with a sharp cutting instrument. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XII.

314 396 137 Fig. 1. Forest scene on Bathurst Island. From the stringy-barked eucalyptus on the left side of the picture, the bark has been removed for the purpose of making a canoe. Another tree, which has been similarly treated, is seen in the background, near the centre of the picture. In the foreground note a tall specimen of the zamia-palm (*Cycas media*).
501 Fig. 2. Various types of paddles in use on Bathurst Island. About $\frac{1}{10}$ natural size.

PLATE XIII.

764 Figs. 1 and 2. Distant and near view of a native grave, surrounded by five carved and painted posts, Bathurst Island. Note the cleared space and the position of grave, viz.: at the junction between open woodland and thicket. A tall Bathurst Islander in seen in Fig. 2.

PLATE XIV.

415 Fig. 1. A melon-shell (*Melo diadema*) used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Fig. 2. A *Fusus pricei* used as a drinking vessel. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
Figs. 3 and 4. Drinking cups made out of folded sheets of paper-bark (*Melaleuca*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 764 Figs. 5a, 5b, 5c, 5d, 5e. Painted and carved posts of native grave shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XV.

415 Fig. 1. A series of four shells of the *Cyrena australiensis* which have been used for holding red, white and yellow earth-pigments to mix with water as required. $\frac{1}{2}$ natural size.
317 386 Fig. 2. Lumps of yellow ochre (on the left), white pipe-clay (in the centre), and red ochre (on the right), used in the decoration of the grave posts shown in previous plate. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
413 Fig. 3. Primitive paint brushes made by macerating the ends of short pieces of the shoots of the climbing palm (*Calamus Australis*). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
301 Figs. 4 and 6. Special corrobboree arm-rings. $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.
532 Fig. 5. A corrobboree mask (?). $\frac{1}{4}$ natural size.

PLATE XVI.

291 532 764 Figs. 1 and 2. Bathurst Island natives painting grave-posts. Note the cosmetic body-scars in imitation of the leaf of the zamia palm (*Cycas media*).

5: Basedow D-5 (1911)1913 OI20 Tiwi OI20

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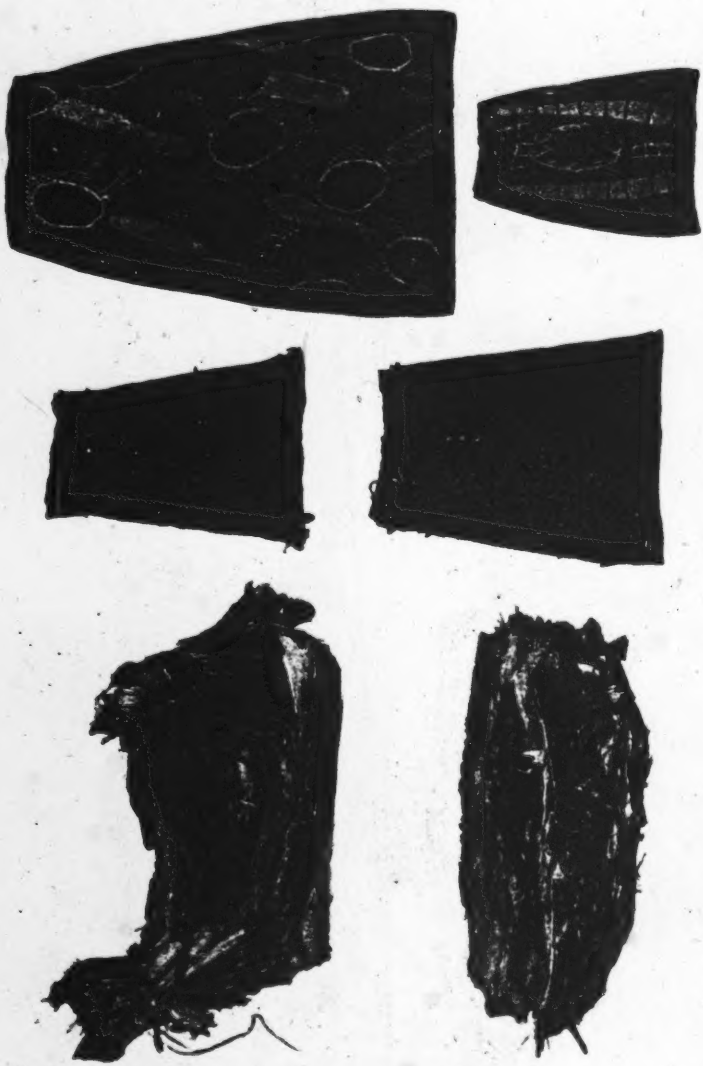

[END PLATE 2]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE P. 321]

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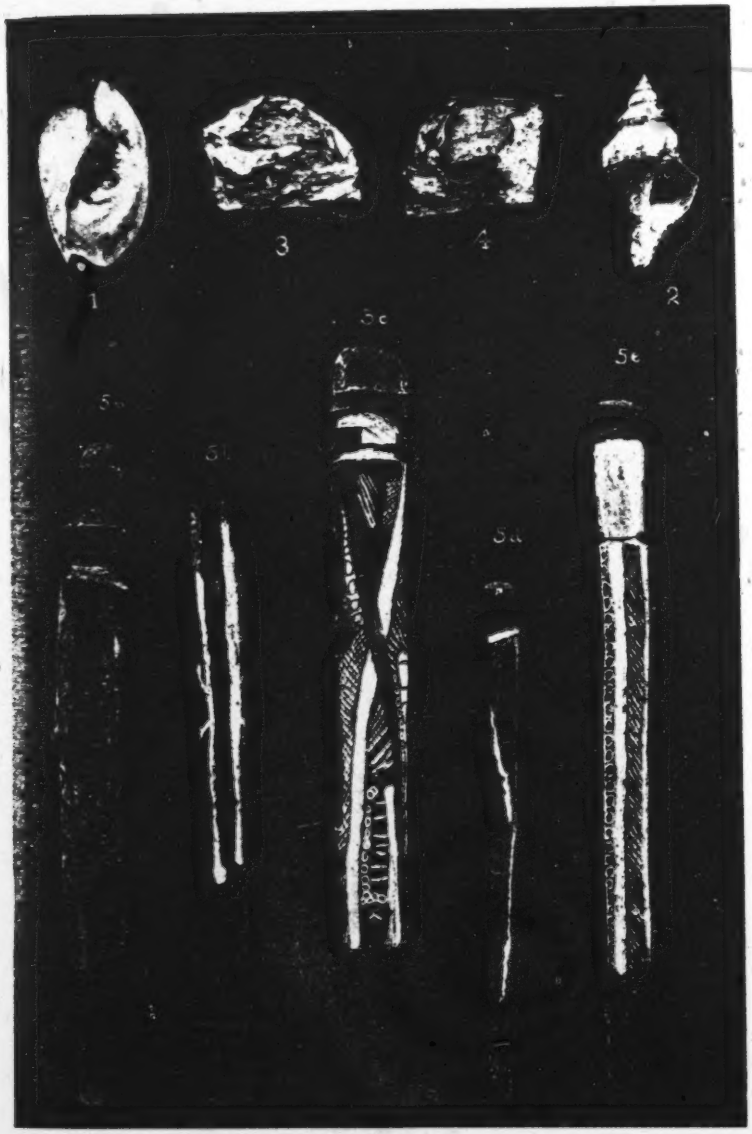

[END PLATE 8]

[FOR EXPLANATION OF PLATE SEE P. 322 -ANALYST]

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NOTES ON THE NATIVES OF BATHURST ISLAND, NORTH AUSTRALIA.

[END PLATE 9]

[FOR EXPLANATION SEE P. 322— ANALYST]